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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System Awarded Accreditation from The Joint Commission

OMAHA, Neb., Nov. 20, 2013 – The Department of Veterans Affairs Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System has earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for accreditation by demonstrating compliance with The Joint Commission's national standards for health care quality and safety in behavioral health care. The accreditation award recognizes VA NWIHCS's dedication to continuous compliance with The Joint Commission's state-of-the-art standards.

VA NWIHCS underwent a rigorous on-site survey in July. A team of Joint Commission expert surveyors evaluated VA NWIHCS for compliance with standards of care specific to the needs of individuals served and families, including infection prevention and control, leadership and medication management.

"In achieving Joint Commission accreditation, VA NWIHCS has demonstrated its commitment to the highest level of care for the people they serve," says Tracy Griffin Collander, LCSW, executive director, Behavioral Health Care Accreditation, The Joint Commission. "Behavioral Health accreditation is a voluntary process and I commend VA NWIHCS for successfully undertaking this challenge to elevate its standard of care and instill confidence in the community it serves."

"With Joint Commission accreditation, we are making a significant investment in quality on a day-to-day basis from the top down. Joint Commission accreditation provides us a framework to take our organization to the next level and helps create a culture of excellence," said Marci Mylan, PhD., Director, VA NWIHCS. "Achieving Joint Commission accreditation, for our organization, is a major step toward maintaining excellence and continually improving the care we provide."

The Joint Commission's behavioral health care standards address important functions relating to the care of individuals served and the management of behavioral health care organizations. The standards are developed in consultation with behavioral health care experts, providers, measurement experts, individuals served and their families.

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About VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System

The VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System's mission is to honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being. VA NWIHCS employees serve more than 161,000 Veterans in Nebraska, western Iowa and portions of Kansas and Missouri. The system includes a tertiary medical center in Omaha and a Community Living Center in Grand Island, Neb. Community-based outpatient clinics are located in Lincoln, Grand Island, North Platte, Norfolk, and Bellevue, Neb., and Shenandoah, Iowa; and a contract outreach clinic in O'Neill, Neb. For more information, visit <http://www.nebraska.va.gov>

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